

REMARKS

Applicant has carefully reviewed the Examiner's September 12, 2003, Official Action, and respectfully requests reconsideration based on the above amendments and the following comments.

Claims 2, 3, 6, 10, 12-13, 16 and 20 have been canceled. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7-9, 14-15, and 17-19 remain in the application for consideration.

In response to the Examiner's objection to the drawings, Applicant has deleted Figs. 3 and 5 and Fig. 4 has been renumbered as Fig. 3. Corresponding amendments have been made to the specification and claims 3, 6, 13 and 16 covering the features to which the Examiner has objected to, have been deleted. Applicant respectfully submits that this objection has now been overcome.

The Examiner has further rejected claims 1, 4-11 and 14-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akita '596 in view of Erickson '548 and Benedict '917, and claims 2, 3, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akita in view of Erickson and Benedict further in view of the Admitted Prior Art (APA). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections especially as applied to the claims as amended.

As the Examiner will note, Applicant has amended the claims to limit the material from which the upper and lower covering layer are made to textile glass fabric, and the intermediate layer to fiber fleece. Further, the supporting disk is limited to consist of only three layers.

The claimed supporting disk is a compound body which is according to amended claim 1 and according to the explanation on page 3 last paragraph of the specification built up in a very special way, namely by outer textile glass fabric layers and an immediate layer of fiber fleece. The stiffness of the supporting disk is caused by the high tensile strength of the outer layers. Those outer layers are kept at a distance from each other by the intermediate fiber fleece which is made from an inexpensive material.

The combination of these inventive features achieves a very stiff and strengthened supporting disk which has much higher stiffness than the known multi layer supporting disks.

In comparison, Akita discloses a surface grinding wheel having a supporting disk 20, which has only one layer and which, therefore, is not at all comparable to the supporting disk according to the invention.

Benedict discloses a surface grinding wheel which is completely different to the supporting disk of the invention. Benedict does not disclose an independent

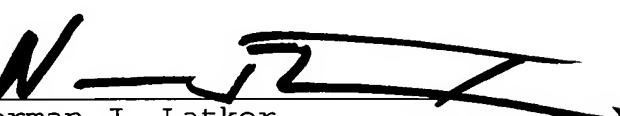
supporting disk but only an integrated grinding wheel with reinforcement in the form of an intermediate layer of a fibrous material.

Erickson discloses a cut-off wheel which must be flexible. From there the cut-off wheel cannot be compared to the claimed supporting disk which has to be stiff. Furthermore Erickson does not disclose a fiber fleece between the two interior layers 41 of glass fabric.

Applicant respectfully submits that the functions achieved by the claimed invention through its inventive combination of features are not disclosed or made obvious to one skilled in the art by the cited prior art. Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent amended claims 1 and 11 and claims dependent therefrom as patentable over the cited prior art.

Applicant respectfully solicits the Examiner's early review and issuance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,
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